



# Research Award Administration Guidelines

## Scope

This policy covers all applied research funds disbursed by the New Brunswick Innovation Foundation (NBIF) but does not apply to the NBIF Innovation Voucher or Venture Capital investments. This policy is active as of Oct 7, 2019 and applies to all awards granted on or after this date.

## Preamble

Wherever possible, the NBIF applies the 2017 rules and regulations of the Tri-Agencies of Canada, specifically the Tri-Agency Financial Administration guide ([http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/Professors-Professeurs/FinancialAdminGuide-GuideAdminFinancier/index\\_eng.asp](http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/Professors-Professeurs/FinancialAdminGuide-GuideAdminFinancier/index_eng.asp)). Our provincial focus, our applied research mandate and the nature of our funding sources necessitates, however, some differences from the Tri-Agencies, which we outline in this document. In the event of a dispute or lack of clarity, the NBIF's Director of Research or CEO has final say in the administration of its awards.

## Disbursement of Funding

NBIF Research funding can only be disbursed to approved research institutions in the province of New Brunswick. A list of the approved institutes is shown in Appendix A.

## Leveraging

A source of financing can be leveraged against NBIF funding only if it directly contributes to the work described in the funding application. Funding that supports the program, group or researcher in general but does not impact the described work in the application will not be counted as leverage.

NBIF cannot leverage funding provided by the Government of New Brunswick (GNB) or agencies wholly supported by GNB (e.g. NBHRF). However, NBIF can support projects receiving provincial funding by leveraging other eligible partners' contributions. Applicants should contact their institution's research office to discuss specific cases. Also, money from a previous NBIF grant cannot be used to leverage another NBIF grant.

Federal sources of funding (e.g. NSERC, CFI) can be leveraged. While Mitacs funding can be included in a funding table containing other sources of financing, NBIF cannot use solely Mitacs funding for leverage in a grant application. Additionally, the NBIF cannot be a named partner on a Mitacs grant unless the intern is working at the NBIF on a research problem that is relevant to our core business.

There is no restriction on other sources of cash contributions, e.g. from international grants, private sector partners, not-for-profit agencies etc. Additionally, the NBIF does not have any stacking rules, e.g. there is no limit on the proportion of federal money that can be leveraged.

If the leveraged funds are already secured, evidence must be provided at the time of application. If the funds are not secured at the time of application, evidence that they are secured must be provided before the award can be disbursed.

## Overhead/Indirect Expenses

Funding from the NBIF cannot be used to pay for indirect expenses or overhead.

## In-kind contributions

In-kind contributions can be counted as a source of leverage and may count for up to 50% of the total leveraged funding, unless otherwise specified in the award description. All valuations of in-kind contribution must be based on fair value and justification of the amounts claimed must be available if requested. The following may not be claimed as an in-kind contribution:

- Salary of the principal investigator (except for the Social Innovation Research Fund)
- Equipment already in place in the applicant's lab / facilities
- Costs for use of the applicant's normal lab space/facilities at the institution (e.g. rental, provision of utilities like heat and water)

A non-exhaustive list of valid in-kind contributions includes: material donated by an industrial partner, analysis services provided by an academic collaborator, time spent on the project by collaborators in the private sector, research release credits provided by the institution, vendor discounts on equipment, etc. The value of research release credits should be calculated based on actual cost to the institution. The nature of all in-kind sources must be described in the application and acceptance of the contribution as a valid source of leverage rests at the discretion of the NBIF.

## Retroactive Expenses

The NBIF cannot disburse funding for project costs already incurred before the date of application (this is taken as the date at which the electronic application is submitted to the NBIF or, failing this, the date at which NBIF confirms receipt of the application). However, the NBIF will not assume any responsibility for costs incurred for a research proposal that is not ultimately approved for funding. Other sources of funding claimed as leverage cannot have been already spent at the time of application. Multi-year grants are eligible to be used a source of leverage even if the grant has already begun (e.g. the 3rd year of a 5-year NSERC Discovery Award) as long as the funding claimed as leverage has not yet been spent.

## Travel

NBIF funding can be used to pay for travel expenses only where these are critical to complete the proposed project. In general, attendance at academic research conferences will not be supported unless this can be demonstrated to be critical to the work (i.e. for more than just general knowledge dissemination). However, the cost of attendance at workshops, industry engagement sessions and other events with active involvement of a variety of stakeholders can be included.

Travel directly related to the research is considered an eligible expense, e.g. for data collection, sampling, field work, and collaborator meetings.

## Consulting Fees

Consulting fees are an eligible expense but require justification as to the nature of the service provided and how it is critical to the research project. However, fees where the applicant or the members of the research team act as consultants are not eligible expenses.

## Intellectual Property and Publications

Due to our focus on applied work and the important role that confidential research plays in this space, our approach to IP is substantially different from the Tri Agencies. We are in the process of drafting a separate IP and open innovation policy to define this.

The costs to protect intellectual property (patenting costs, legal fees etc.) are considered eligible expenses.

## General Conditions of Award

All NBIF funding grants are conditional. Institutions must agree and conform to the following conditions (unless otherwise described in notice of decision) in order to receive an offer of funding from the NBIF.

Condition 1: The NBIF allows applications to be made based on tentative or not-yet-secured leverage sources. Therefore, before disbursement can be made, the NBIF must be provided with supporting documents that demonstrate that all other funding for this research project has been secured and that the project is fully funded. If the funding sources have changed vs the time of application, written approval from the NBIF for the new sources is required.

Condition 2: If future investments to further develop and commercialize the Intellectual Property emerging from the project are required; NBIF requests that the applicant return to NBIF to discuss additional funding options;

Condition 3: Researchers whose projects involve activities using human subjects or requiring the use of animals will obtain appropriate approvals from their institution (e.g. from research ethics boards or animal care committees) before the activities begin.

## Eligibility of Faculty

The NBIF does not accept joint applications; there can be solely one named Applicant or Principal Investigator (PI). This applicant must be employed at the institution in a role as described below, or, have signed an offer of employment for one of these positions.

- Universities: A full-time tenured, tenure-track, or lifetime emeritus professor. Professors on non-permanent contracts are eligible if their contract lasts at least until the project end date. Adjunct professors are permitted only if their primary place of employment is in NB and their term as adjunct must last until at least the project end date. Adjunct professors outside of the university sector can apply for funding only for the direct support of students.
- Colleges: A full time individual in a role whose primary purpose is conducting research is eligible. Also eligible are full time teaching staff with either a permanent position or a contract position lasting until at least the project end date. The position must permit the individual to engage in research activities that are not under the direction of another individual.
- Research Institutes: A full time individual in a role whose primary purpose is conducting research. The position must be either permanent or a contract position lasting until at least the project end date.

Applicants must be in good standing with the NBIF, including having filed any outstanding status reports and having paid or returned any money owing to the NBIF.

The NBIF recognises that projects may involve multiple collaborators in addition to the named PI. These collaborators can contribute funding to the project which can be used as leverage; a letter of support from the collaborator is required that gives express permission for the funds to be used in this way.

## Eligibility of Partners

Non-academic partners (e.g. not for profit organisations and private sector companies) may be included as collaborators in research projects. There is no restriction as to the location of these partners; they may be anywhere in the world. However, the not for profit organisations must be registered entities and the private sector companies must be officially incorporated.

## Extensions, Deferrals and Transfers

All NBIF awards are intended to be used in a limited amount of time. The standard amount of time per award is given in Appendix B and should be taken as the limiting date for use of the funding unless otherwise specified in the notice of decision letter. Extensions, up to the maximum listed in Appendix B, will be considered on request. A written request must be submitted to the NBIF 30 days before the funding expiration date. The request must explain the need for an extension and provide a date for when the research activities will be completed.

An exception is made for the maximum extension times in the case of a grantee that takes an extended leave of absence (e.g. for maternity, parental, medical or family leave) during the award period. In this circumstance, an extension of any award for up to two years may be requested.

After a research project is completed, any remaining unspent funds must be returned to the NBIF. These funds cannot be transferred or used for another purpose without the written approval of the NBIF.

In the event that a grantee moves from the original institution to another approved institution (See Appendix A), any unused NBIF funds can be transferred with them. If a grantee leaves their original institution for another place of employment not on the approved list, unused funding cannot be transferred and must be returned to the NBIF. Institutions can request that the funding be re-assigned to another faculty member at that same institution, but this decision is at the discretion of the NBIF.

## **Research Involving People and Animals**

Any research involving people and/or animals should comply with the relevant ethics standards as defined by the Tri-Agencies. If a Research Ethics Board (REB) or Animal Care Committee (ACC) approval is required, these approvals must be obtained before the relevant activities can begin. The NBIF does not require evidence of these approvals; agreement to the condition of award to obtain these approvals is sufficient.

## **Status reporting**

Research activity reports and /or financial reports are required at the completion of a grant. In some cases, intermediate progress reports may also be requested. These reports must be completed within 3 months of the date of report request by the NBIF.

If the grantee leaves the institution during the course of an award without submitting the needed reports, the institution's appropriate administration office assumes responsibility for filing the reports.

# Appendix A

## Approved Research Institutions

NAME OF INSTITUTION	CLASSIFICATION
Atlantic Cancer Research Institute	Research Institute
CCNB (all campuses and CCNB-INNOV network)	College
Dalhousie Medicine, NB campus	University
Huntsman Marine Science Centre	Research Institute
Mount Allison University	University
Northern Hardwoods Research Institute	Research Institute
NBCC (all campuses)	College
Research and Productivity Council (RPC)	Research Institute
Saint Thomas University	University
UNB (all campuses)	University
Université de Moncton (all campuses)	University
Valorés (also known as l'Institut de recherche sur les zones côtières)	Research Institute

# Appendix B

## Standard Duration of NBIF Research Awards

AWARD NAME	TIME TO CONFIRM CONDITIONS	TIME TO USE FUNDS*	MAXIMUM POSSIBLE EXTENSION (BY REQUEST)
Research Assistantships Initiative	6 months	2 years	1 year
Equipment	1.5 years	2.5 years	1 year
Lab-to-Market	6 months	2 years	6 months
Emerging Projects	6 months	1.5 years	6 months
Talent Recruitment/ Start-up	6 months	1 year	6 months
Research Professional Initiative	6 months	3.5 years	1 year
Graduate Scholarships	N/A	4 years	1 year
Social Innovation Research Fund	6 months	2 years	6 months

\*Calculated from date that conditions were confirmed, except in the case of Start-up funds which is calculated from the date the faculty member takes up the position